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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Wednesday, January 1, 1941

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "FARM RECORDS FOR FARM SECURITY." Information from the Farm Security Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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If you were planning a long automobile trip, the first thing you'd do would be to mark your route on the best road map you could find. You would want to know how many miles you would have to cover to see the things you wanted to see, and which roads were the best, and what short side trips you could take to see things you always wanted to see.

Well, that's just about what the Farm Security Administration reports that thousands of families are doing now. Only instead of a road map, they are working out their farm and home plans - using last year's record book to chart their course for the new year. Let's see what kind of roads these farm families find in a record book.

First, the home part of the record book shows the road to a new home plan. Was the homemaker able to meet the canning budget she worked out last January? If she didn't put up as many quarts of fruits and vegetables as she planned, where was the fault? Perhaps the garden was too small. So this year she will plant a larger garden. Maybe she will find that some foods are already gone from the shelves because her family liked them better than something else. In that case she'll plant less of one kind of vegetable and more of another.

How about milk, cream, butter, eggs, and meat? Has there been enough of all these foods for the family? And how is the supply on hand? Perhaps another cow should be bought..... We find here the road for the home plan joins the road for the farm plan. Lots of milk is needed for growing children so their bones will be strong and their teeth sound. We've always been told - and it has been proved

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true time and again - that the road to good health is good diet. Well, that road runs through the home plan and can be found in the home record book.

What are some of the other things farm families have done during the year to improve their health? Here they are, right in the record book. Last year, for example, the Jacksons worked out their home plan and arranged to have Mary's tonsils out because she had been having so many colds and was missing school. Good planning and budgeting made this possible and the record book shows it under "necessary medical care." Now Mary is a husky youngster and never misses a day of school.

Farm families spend so much time in their homes - especially in the winter time - that a bright, cheerful home is necessary if they are to enjoy home life. Thousands of families try to make their homes attractive and comfortable, in little ways that don't cost much money. It's easy to use paint and paper in a room and doesn't cost much if you do the work yourself.

Many a farm woman knows how to make attractive curtains from flour or sugar sacks, dyed in colors to harmonize with rugs and furniture, or how to paper or calcimine walls in light colors to "wake up" a room. You can arrange for these things in your home plan and all money you spend for home improvement shows up in the record book. Often the homemaker finds she was able to do all the things she wanted to do to her home for even less than she estimated.

Of course, clothing usually makes a big hole in a budget. But many families find careful planning means better clothing for less money. They find that remodeling things older members of the family outgrow, is an inexpensive way to provide clothing for the younger children. Or changing the color by first dyeing the material makes a pretty garment that doesn't look a "hand-me-down." Women often use clothing too badly worn for remodeling to make hooked or braided rugs. All these things show up in the record book because they keep clothing expenditures down to a minimum.

Keeping the family record book is really fun and not just another form to fill

out. A record book, if properly filled out, shows the way to another year on a sound financial basis. It enables you to see where your money went last year and - equally important - where the money you spend came from. Careful checking of the record book often suggests little economies you can make another year. All of us know that a number of small savings soon count up when we don't have too much cash to start with.

Farming and homemaking are just as much a business enterprise as running a grocery store, and they know no business man can afford to operate without keeping books. It's true they don't keep big ledgers and journals like a business concern, but their simple family record books are just as business-like and show what they've earned and spent in a little summary at the end of the year. "Be it ever so humble", they do make up a profit and loss statement.

The whole family may keep the record book - father, mother, and the youngsters all taking part. Sometimes one of the older children takes the responsibility for keeping track of family income and expenditures, and does a mighty fine job.....

Well, we've gone a long way from our road map but I think you will see that the parallel hasn't been too far-fetched. Many families are finding that the road to successful farm and homemaking comes directly from good records, carefully kept during the year.

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